REMARKS

The Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 20, 2004 (Paper No.8). Claims 1 to 46 are in the application, of which Claims 1, 12, 23, 33 and 40 are the independent claims. Claims 1, 12, 23, 33 and 40 are being amended. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Turning first to formal matters involving the drawings, the Office Action indicates that the drawings filed on August 30, 2001, together with a Request For Approval of Drawing Changes, are accepted by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants submit herewith replacement drawing sheets, which include the changes approved by the Examiner.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication in the Office Action of patentable subject matter, with the Office Action objecting to Claims 8 to 10, 19 to 21, 29 to 31, 37, 38, 44 and 45 as being dependent on a rejected claim, and indicating that these would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Because the claims on which Claims 8 to 10, 19 to 21, 29 to 31, 37, 38, 44 and 45 depend are believed to be allowable over the applied art, these claims have not been rewritten in independent form.

By the Office Action, Claims 1 to 7, 11 to 18, 22 to 28, 32 to 36, 39 to 43 and 46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 5,978,560 (Tan). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

The present invention generally concerns data reproduction, and filtering data for reproduction. For example, in a case that the data reproduction involves a print operation, selection operation is used to determine what if any stored data is printed. The

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selection uses criteria and attribute information associated with the reproduction data to determine the data that is to be printed.

By virtue of this arrangement, it is possible to filter out reproduction data stored with other reproduction which is not intended to be reproduced.

Turning to the specific language of the claims, Claim 1 defines a data storing and reproducing system using a computer network. A server stores reproduction data. At least one attachment unit is coupled to the server, the at least one attachment unit comprising an interfacing means with a portable memory device having a reference to the reproduction data. First and second reproduction devices are coupled to one or more of the at least one attachment unit, the first reproduction device is capable of performing a first reproduction of the reproduction data and the second reproduction device is capable of performing a second reproduction of the reproduction data, the second data reproduction being different than the first data reproduction. Rule processing means processes a rule set to determine whether to reproduce the reproduction data based on whether the reproduction data satisfies selection criteria of the rule set. The at least one attachment unit requests the reproduction data from the server for use by the reproduction device, if the reproduction data satisfies the selection criteria.

The applied art, namely Tan, is not seen to teach each and every one of the above-identified features, particularly as regards

Tan is seen to describe a system for load-balancing print jobs among the networked printers. More particularly, Tan is seen to describe using both logical printers, which the user selects to generate the print output, and physical printers, which are then

selected to perform the actual print output based on a known capacity of the printer and the current number of jobs assigned to the physical printer. (See Tan, Abstract, Figure 5, and col. 7, commencing at line 20) Tan is seen to describe an attribute database 600 which stores printer attributes for use in load balancing. Referring to col. 5, commencing at line 31, Tan's printer attributes are seen to define printer characteristics such as printer speed and resolution, as well as current load information and maximum load information. However, the printer attributes described in Tan are not seen to determine whether to perform a print, but rather are merely seen to be used to determine which physical printer is to perform the print. That is, Tan is seen select printers for the purpose of load balancing and is not seen to use selection criteria to determine whether or not to reproduce reproduction data.
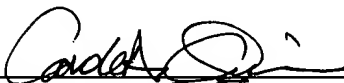
Therefore, for at least the foregoing reasons, Claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Further, Applicants submit that Claims 12, 23, 33 and 40 are believed to be in condition for allowance for at least the same reasons.

The other claims are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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